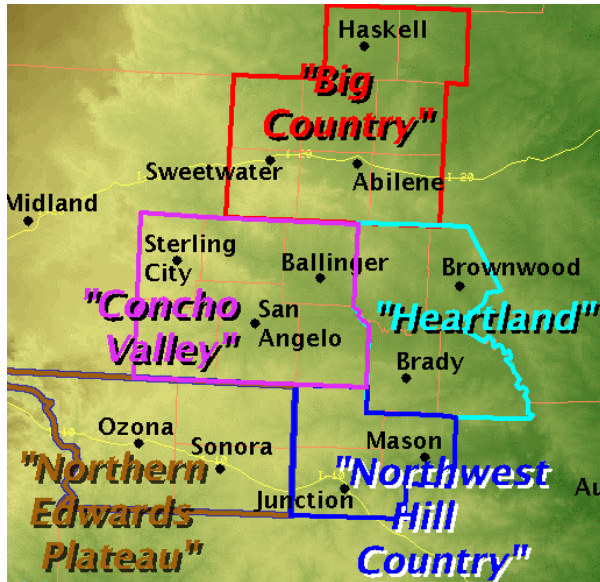


Outlook for May-July 2012

Recent Weather Trends and Drought Status in West Central Texas

A background map below shows the geographic regions of West Central Texas which are referenced in

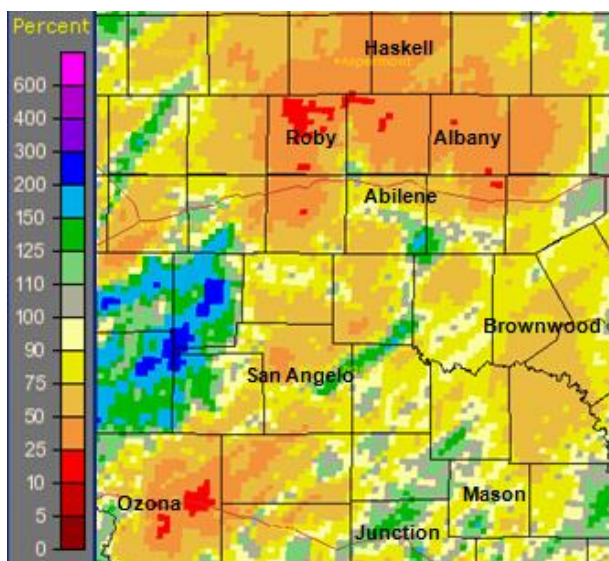


this outlook. Above normal precipitation occurred during winter (December, January, and February) at many locations across West Central Texas.

Although beneficial rainfall has occurred across the region during the winter, precipitation for the past 60 days has been below normal across much of West Central Texas. Figure 1 shows the percent of normal precipitation, for the past 60 days ending April 25th. Much of the Big Country has received less than 50 percent of normal precipitation during this time period. The lowest precipitation amounts, less than 25 percent of normal, have occurred in a few areas north of Sweetwater and just northwest of Anson. Near to slightly above normal precipitation has occurred in parts of eastern

Throckmorton, southeastern Taylor, and southwestern Callahan Counties. Farther to the south across the Concho Valley and Heartland areas, below normal precipitation has occurred with a few areas receiving less than 50 percent of normal. Above normal precipitation has occurred across much of Sterling and western Irion Counties, and also in a few scattered areas across southeastern Runnels, northwestern Concho, eastern Tom Green, and southern McCulloch Counties.

Figure 1: Departure from Normal Precipitation for the past 60 days, ending April 25th



The last widespread rainfall occurred on April 7-8. Showers and thunderstorms have occurred on a few occasions since April 8th, but spatial coverage has been isolated and more scattered.

The drought status has changed little across West Central Texas during the past few weeks. The U.S. Drought Monitor as of April 24th, issued through the National Drought Mitigation Center, shows the worst category of exceptional drought across western Haskell, northern Fisher, and extreme northwestern Jones Counties (Figure 2).

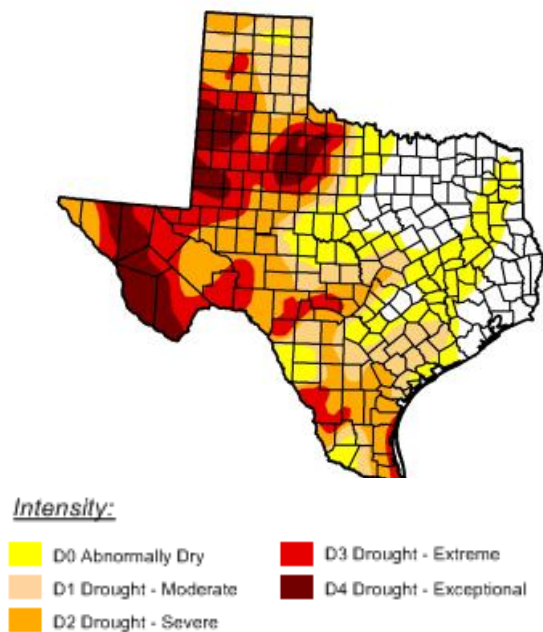


Figure 2: U.S. Drought Monitor for Texas (April 24th). Courtesy of USDA, National Drought Mitigation Center, Dept. of Commerce and NOAA.

Surrounding the exceptional drought area, extreme drought conditions are shown across eastern Haskell, western Throckmorton, much of Jones, and southern Fisher Counties. Moderate to severe drought conditions are indicated across eastern and southern parts of the Big Country, and across the northern and western Concho Valley. Farther to the east, much of the Heartland and parts of the eastern Concho Valley

are abnormally dry. The Drought Monitor takes into account the short-term meteorological and agricultural aspects, as well as the long-term hydrological components, of the drought.

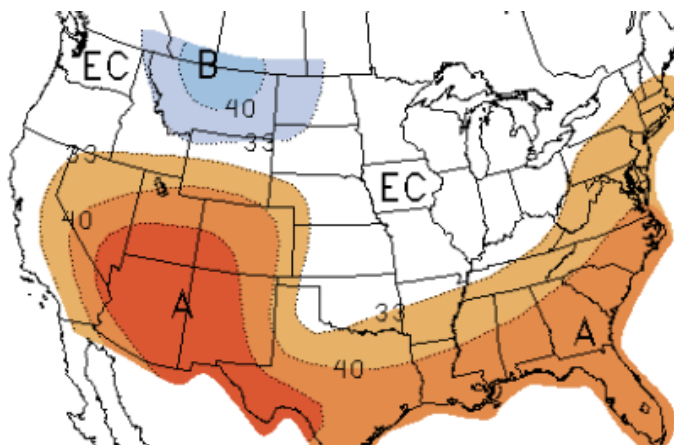
Current La Nina Status and Implications

In the equatorial Pacific Ocean, La Nina conditions continued to weaken in March, and a transition to Neutral conditions is currently underway. The Climate Prediction Center indicates that Neutral conditions are expected from May through summer.

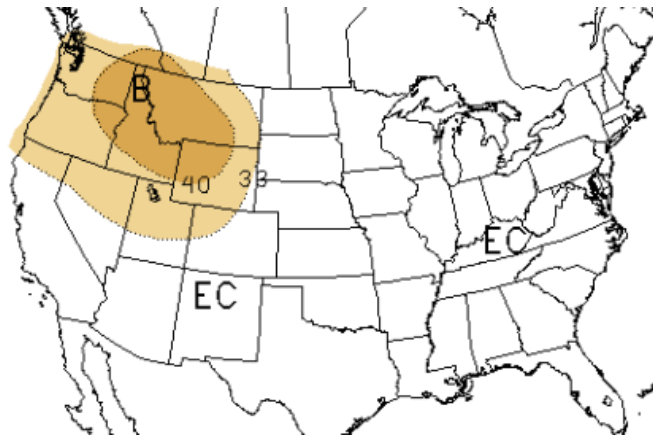
Climate Outlook for May-July, 2012

The 30-day temperature outlook for May, from the Climate Prediction Center (CPC), indicates an enhanced probability for above normal temperatures across all of West Central Texas (not shown). The CPC 90-day temperature outlook, May through July (Figure 3) also indicates the probability for temperatures to average above normal across our area.

Figure 3: Climate Prediction Center 90 Day Outlook for Temperature from May-July



The CPC 30-day precipitation outlook for May shows equal chances for precipitation to be below, near, or above normal across West Central Texas (not shown).



The 90-day precipitation outlook (Figure 4) also indicates equal chances for precipitation to be below, near, or above normal for our area.

Climate outlooks at this time of year incorporate trends of temperature across our region related to decadal variability. Trends compare the most recent 10-year average to the 30-year climatology average (1981-2010).

Figure 4: Climate Prediction Center 90 Day Outlook for precipitation from May-July

Climate outlooks for temperature and precipitation during the spring and summer seasons typically have greater uncertainty, and La Nina and El Nino have the least influence on the overall pattern. Neutral conditions accentuate the lack of a climate signal. This uncertainty is reflected in the CPC precipitation outlooks.

Other factors can have more of an influence on rainfall and temperature patterns during the late spring and early summer. Some factors include: anomalous soil moisture and the spatial coverage of thunderstorms.

Long-range outlooks at this time of year do not take into account the possible effects of individual weather systems and smaller scale weather phenomena, like thunderstorms and thunderstorm complexes. These types of smaller scale weather features can have a significant influence on rainfall during this time of year. The spring season of thunderstorms and severe weather often extends into the first part of June across our region. Rainfall amounts can vary widely over short distances when scattered showers and thunderstorms occur with locally heavy rainfall. Precipitation records also show the spatial variability in the rainfall which can occur during this time frame (especially in May and June).

Seasonal Drought Outlook

The latest U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook for May through July 2012, issued by the Climate Prediction Center (Figure 5), indicates that drought conditions are likely to persist across the regions of Texas where they are currently in place. This encompasses much of western Texas, including areas of the Big Country and Concho Valley. Across our region, water losses from evaporation and transpiration increase substantially in the May-July time frame, when temperatures are much warmer. These losses could be accelerated if well-above normal temperatures are accompanied by stronger than normal winds. This drying soil increases the amount of rainfall needed to replenish soil moisture.

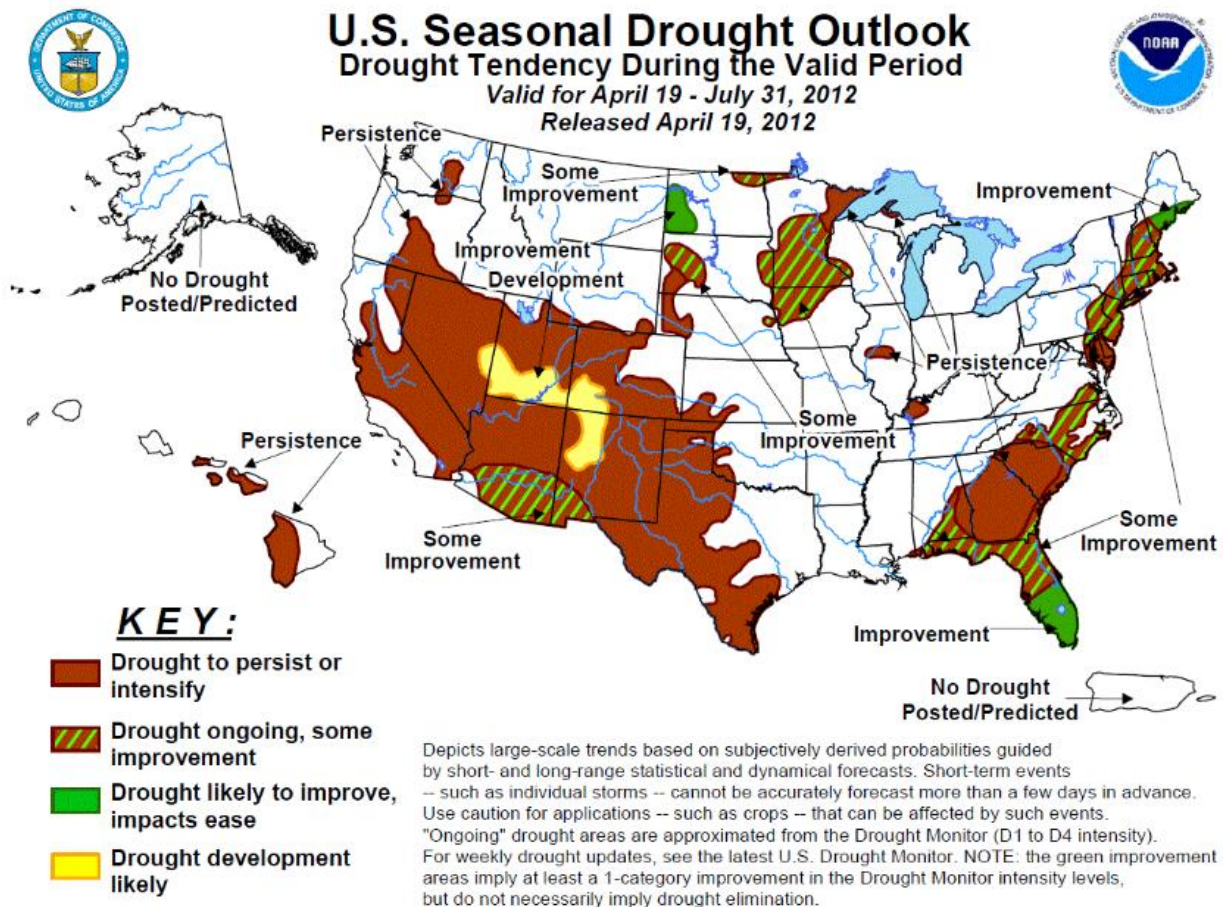


Figure 5: U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook, valid April 19 – July 31, 2012